

Message Text

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14
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 L-03 INR-07 SP-02 PRS-01 SS-15

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R 220124Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8975
INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 6805

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, AS, US
SUBJECT: MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM: MAYAGUEZ ISSUE

REF: CANBERRA 6774

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER TO AMBASSADOR FROM DEPUTY PRIME
MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR OVERSEAS TRADE J.D. ANTHONY, DATED
SEPTEMBER 21, 1976, ON MEAT IMPORTS:

BEGIN QUOTE. MY DEAR AMBASSADOR,

SINCE OUR MEETING YESTERDAY, I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY
TO READ YOUR NOTE WHICH RECOUNTS THE HISTORY OF EXCHANGES
BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ON THE QUESTION OF MEAT IMPORTS
INTO THE UNITED STATES THROUGH THE UNITED STATES FOREIGN
TRADE ZONE AT MAYAGUEZ, PUERTO RICO.

AS IS OFTEN THE CASE IN DISCUSSIONS ON COMPLEX ISSUES
OF THIS SORT, IT SEEMS THAT SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS HAVE
ARISEN BETWEEN OFFICIALS. I REFER IN PARTICULAR TO THE
DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS PLACED ON THE EXCHANGES WHICH
OCCURRED ON AUGUST 31 BETWEEN MR. J.T. SMITH, THE
AUSTRALIAN MINISTER (COMMERCIAL) AND U.S. OFFICIALS.
I AM ADVISED THAT, AT THAT MEETING, MR. SMITH INDICATED
THAT, SUBJECT TO A NUMBER OF ASSURANCES BEING RECEIVED
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FROM THE U.S. AUTHORITIES, IT WAS HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT

THE AUSTRALIAN AUTHORITIES MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO ALLOW THE MEAT ON THE VESSEL "BANAGRANDE" TO BE COUNTED AGAINST AUSTRALIA'S VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT ENTITLEMENT. ALTHOUGH U.S. AUTHORITIES CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT MR. SMITH'S VIEW WAS A PERSONAL ONE AND INVOLVED NO COMMITMENT BY HIMSELF OR THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, IT SEEMS THAT U.S. OFFICIALS TOOK THIS VIEW AS A BASIS FOR DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL WHICH, WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, WAS PUT TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AMERICAN NATIONAL CATTLEMAN'S ASSOCIATION. THIS PROPOSAL WAS PRESENTED TO THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY ON SEPTEMBER 3.

IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT THIS DIFFERENCE IN UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPED. HOWEVER, I AM HOPEFUL THAT OUR EXCHANGE HAS CLEARED THE AIR AND WILL FACILITATE THE EARLY RESOLUTION OF THIS MATTER. IN THIS REGARD THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REMAINS WILLING TO AMEND THE VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FOR FUTURE MEAT EXPORTS FROM AUSTRALIA TO THE UNITED STATES VIA THE U.S. FOREIGN TRADE ZONE AT MAYAGUEZ TO BE COUNTED AGAINST AUSTRALIA'S VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT ENTITLEMENT ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT MEAT ON THE VESSEL "BANAGRANDE" WILL NOT BE DEBITED. AS YOU ARE AWARE, THE AUSTRALIAN MEAT BOARD HAS NOT ISSUED ANY NEW APPROVALS TO EXPORT TO MAYAGUEZ SINCE AUGUST 16.

YOURS SINCERELY,
/S/ J.D. ANTHONY END QUOTE.
HARGROVE

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